

Remarks

Claims 7, 9, and 15 have been amended by deleting "uniformly elongated" and adding that the article has a yield ratio of no more than 74%. Support for the amendments can be found, for example, in Examples of Tables 2 and 3.

Claims 7-9 and 15-17 are rejected under 35 USC §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The rejection states that Claims 7, 9 and 15 recite that the microstructure contains "uniformly elongated soft ferrite," however, this feature is not described in the specification. Claims 7-9 and 15-17 are also rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite because the specification does not clearly define the term "uniformly elongated soft ferrite." Claims 7-9 and 15-17 are also rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention because the term "uniformly elongated soft ferrite" is not definite.

The Applicants respectfully disagree. The term is fully supported and readily understood by those skilled in this art. In any event, the rejections are moot in light of the deletion of the terms "uniformly elongated" from Claims 7, 9, and 15.

Claims 7-9 and 15-17 are rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Toyooka. Claims 7, 9 and 15 have been amended to recite that the "steel article has a yield ratio of no more than 74%." The Applicants' specification provides that a low yield ratio, defined as yield strength/tensile strength, aids in pipe expansion. See paragraph [0017] of the Applicants' substitute specification.

Toyooka does not teach or suggest expandable steel pipes nor does it teach steel articles with a "yield ratio of no more than 74%." Indeed, Toyooka is silent as to expandable steel pipes and none of the disclosed articles have a yield ratio of 74% or less. In fact, the values of the yield ratios disclosed in Toyooka examples are 78.6% or more. They are well outside the claimed range of 74% or less. For reference, the Applicants enclose on a separate sheet calculations results of yield strength and tensile strength, with their percentages, disclosed in Tables 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 15 and 17 of the Toyooka examples. It is readily understood from the aforesaid tables that all of the values of the yield ratios disclosed in the examples of Toyooka are 78.6% or more. Moreover, because Toyooka does not teach or suggest that a low yield ratio aids

in pipe expansion or even that pipe expansion is desirable, one skilled in the art would not be motivated to modify Toyooka to obtain a steel article having a yield ratio of no more than 74%.

Tokooka is commonly owned with this application and the Applicants therefore can provide additional information about Toyooka.

For example, the Applicants enclose photographs of microstructures in the longitudinal direction (L direction) and in the perpendicular direction (C direction) of a pipe of Toyooka. It is seen from the photographs that the microstructures of Toyooka have anisotropy in the L direction with the C direction of the pipe. The Applicants' articles do not have anisotropy in the microstructures in sharp contrast to Toyooka (see the photographs of the microstructures of the Applicants' articles).

Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 7-9 and 15-17 are not obvious in view of Toyooka. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejected claims are respectfully requested.

In light of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that the entire application is now in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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